Standard USG-1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the United States government—its origins and its functions.

USG-1.6   Analyze alternative forms of representation and the extent to which they serve the purposes of constitutional government, including arguments for and against representative government as distinguished from direct popular rule, common bases upon which representation has been established, different electoral systems, and differing theories of representation. (P)

Taxonomy Level: 4.2-B   Analyze Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

> Students will have studied the ideas of direct democracy in ancient Greece, representation in the Roman Republic, and the debate on representation in the American constitutional system. There will have been limited development of the nature of representative government and no significant exposure to electoral systems and the philosophical debate on representation and government. (6-2.2; 7-2.3; GS 1.1; GS 6.3; USHC 2.1; USHC 4.2)

It is essential for students to know that representative government is the most common expression of democratic government in the world. Representative government has developed over the centuries and can be manifested in many forms. There is wide debate over the types of limitations that have been, and continue to be, allowed in representative government. Standard limitations have centered on social class, age, economic status, ethnicity, gender, and religion, though the range of who should/not be represented is endless. There has been widespread debate over the issue of direct rule but most modern societies accept that to govern any large-scale unit, direct-rule is not a feasible option. However, on a small scale, direct-rule is still occasionally employed. Students should be exposed to the more common representative systems currently utilized by major democratic systems.

It is not essential for students to know any explicit representative model, the representative model practiced by individual nations, or to identify the advocates of specific theories of representation.

Assessment guidelines:
The objective of this indicator is to analyze the nature of representative government. The primary focus should be an examination and evaluation of models of representative government, including the effectiveness of these models in truly representing the interests and needs of its citizens. Students should be able to distinguish the differences in models of representation and explain the theories of what various models attempt to achieve through their structures.